(b) the action proposed to ensure health maintenance of Army Troops and boost their morale?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) & (b) No, Sir. The morale of the Indian Army is very high. In order to maintain high morale and keep the soldiers stress-free, the Medical Directorate of Army Headquarters has taken the following action:—

(i) The Regimental Medical Officers (RMOs) have been instructed to identify and counsel individuals who show any signs of stress.

(ii) The Zonal Hospitals hold seminars for training the RMOs with appropriate skills to fulfil their role.

(iii) Commanders at all levels have been apprised about how to identify the stress victims and about action to be taken at various levels.

(iv) In addition to the above, short training capsules of relaxation exercises, regular Sainik Sammelan and visits by religious teachers are organised. Regular rotation of Units and individuals, regular leave, prompt attention to grievance, congenial working atmosphere and provision of family accommodation etc. are ensured to the maximum extent so that stress related incidences are kept to the minimum.

Non-utiiisation of Defence Funds

108. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRASEKAR REDDY:

DR.T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been reported in the Economic Times dated the 23rd December, 2002 that Rs. 3,000 crore kept for weapons is lying unutilised, so far;

(b) if so, what were the main reasons for not utilising the fund for purchase of weapons;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(d) if so, who are responsible for this and action taken against them;

(e) whether the Centre has now taken a final decision to utilise this amount for purchase of weapons during 2003; and

(f) if so, to what extent weapon deals have been finalised by now?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (f)The report in the Economic Times dated 23rd December, 2002 captioned "Rs. 3,000 cr. kept for weapons lying unutilised" appears to be based on the 18th Report of the Standing Committee on Defence laid in Rajya Sabha on 17th December, 2002. In the said Report, the Committee had commented upon the reduction of Rs. 3000 cr. made in the Capital expenditure in the Revised Estimates for the year 2001 -2002. The funds allocated during 2001 -2002 could not be utilised fully due to non-fructification of certain major schemes as all the necessary stages like technical evaluation/trials, finalisation of prices and contractual terms and payments as per terms of contracts etc. could not be completed. All these stages cannot be unilaterally completed by the Government.

All efforts are being made by the Government to utilise the allocated funds and new procurement structures have been established with a view to speeding up the procurement process.

Transparency in defence deals

†109. SHRI RK. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to bring transparency in defence deals after the revelation of facts in the film made by the tehelka. com on alleged kickoff in the defence deals;

(b) the details of the new policy made to check the kickoffs in defence deals;

(c) to what extent the said new policy has been successful; and

(d) the number of defence deals in which this new policy has been implemented?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) In order to bring greater transparency to the whole procurement

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.